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PROTESTANTISM:

A LECTURE

BY

THE REV.

ALEXANDER B. WILSON.

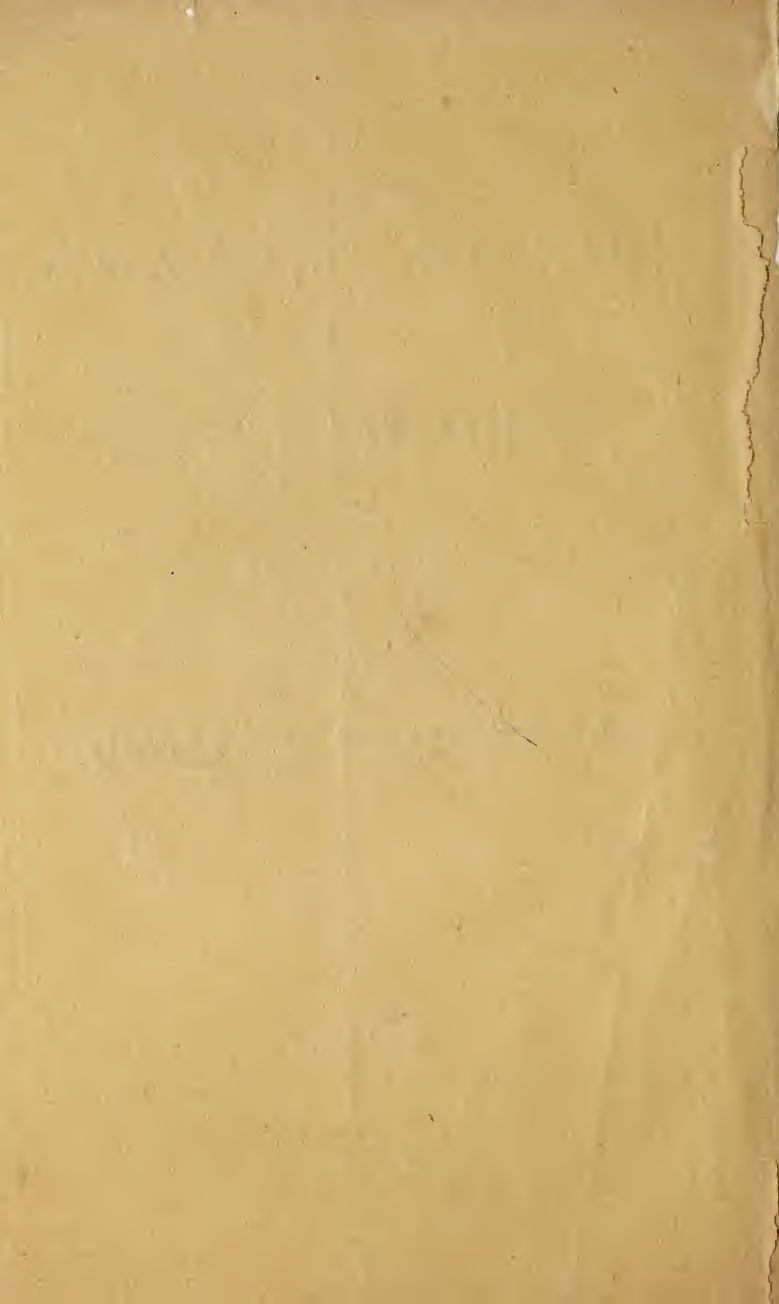
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THE CONNECTION  
BETWEEN  
SIN IN ENGLAND  
AND  
PROTESTANTISM ;

AS TRACED BY MR. DAUNT IN THREE LETTERS IN THE  
*CORK EXAMINER* NEWSPAPER.

A Lecture  
BY  
THE REV. ALEXANDER B. WILSON.

DELIVERED IN THE  
PAROCHIAL SCHOOL HOUSE, BANTRY, FEBRUARY 3RD, 1863.

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## SIN IN ENGLAND AND PROTESTANTISM.

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You have all, no doubt, heard of, and some of you have read, three letters that appeared recently in the *Cork Examiner* Newspaper, addressed by Mr. Daunt of Kilcaskan, to Mr. Puxley of Berehaven.

The contents of these letters (which have attracted considerable attention) may have appeared startling to you, as they profess to reveal facts highly damaging to the Protestant religion. Now it is our boast that we fear not the fullest inquiry. We are confident that the most searching investigation, so far from overturning our Faith, will do much to confirm it. We will then boldly and fairly look these disclosures in the face, and see whether they really warrant the unfavourable inferences that have been drawn from them.

We find in Mr. Daunt's letters an appalling picture of the extent to which sin and crime prevail in Great Britain, together with an assumption of superior morality on the part of Ireland; and a statement that the better condition of the latter country is due to the religion embraced by the majority of its people. All this is put forward for the purpose of shewing that the general distribution of the Bible (such as has been carried into effect in England "the land of Bibles")

is not an effectual remedy for moral depravity; but that on the contrary it has a tendency even to increase it.

Now, in entering upon the consideration of these assertions and conclusions, we may, in the first place observe, that Mr. Daunt's representations respecting the immorality of Great Britain are evidently highly coloured. Those who know England will scarcely recognise it in his description of a kingdom "cankered to the core with vice and irreligion," and "sending up a rank stench of sin and crime to heaven." They will scarcely admit that England has attained to a "supremacy in wickedness," and that, together with Scotland, she is "overspread with the gangrene of irreligion and wickedness."

The statements on which he has based his views on this subject are most of them greatly exaggerated. We know how rashly assertions are often made both in speeches and writings, and even in evidence given before Parliamentary Committees (the sources from which he has derived the testimony he brings forward), and how frequently such assertions required to be modified in order that we may arrive at the exact truth. In fact if we were to accept this kind of testimony as altogether accurate, it could as easily be made available against his position as in favour of it. For if we were to regard all that could be advanced on such authority as unquestionably correct, we would have but little to boast of with respect to our own country, the moral superiority of which he so warmly maintains; it being obvious that we could collect expressions of orators, authors, and witnesses, that paint it in at least as dark colours as those in which England has been depicted. Thus the *Saturday Review*, an authority quoted by Mr. Daunt, says, with reference to Ireland, in its publication of the 10th of January last, that last year "was a year of bloody and savage murders—of



murders perpetrated on principle and system, and notoriously sanctioned by the guilty sympathies of the most numerous class of the population." It pronounces "organized assassination" to be "the national crime of Ireland." It asserts that the Irish murders "invariably command the undisguised approval of large masses of the people;" and observes:—"In Ireland it may be said that there is a public opinion in favour of homicide." It endorses the statement of a Longford witness, that "many very decent people in Ireland are fond of murderers." It says that in Ireland "murder is, as it were, domesticated among the people;" and assumes that there is in this country "a state of popular feeling and opinion which abets, encourages, applauds, and protects crime." It dwells on "the extensive diffusion of so tremendous a heresy as the lawfulness of assassination;" and "the prevalence of the tenet that murder in cold blood is meritorious." Testimony of this kind would not be of much use in helping forward Mr. Daunt's conclusions.

He offers us, indeed, in one particular, the additional evidence of statistics. He shows that the Workhouses in Ireland contained, in 1852, a far smaller proportion of illegitimate children than did those in England and Wales. But may not this evidence amount to nothing more than, that, owing to the greater prosperity of the latter countries, moral persons and their offspring are not, in them, obliged to enter these houses in such large numbers? I will, in another part of my lecture, have occasion to bring forward some statistics which lend weight to this explanation of the matter.

However, after making all reasonable allowance for misconception of evidence, and for exaggeration both in the original statements, and in the interpretation given to them by an ardent advocate, there will still remain proof of such sin and crime in England as we cannot contemplate without

deep concern. The connection between this admitted fact and Mr. Daunt's conclusions we will afterwards consider.

The next point to which our attention is attracted is the assertion that there is in Ireland a less amount of wickedness than in Great Britain. Now, in proof of this it would not be sufficient to show, supposing that this could be done, that our country is comparatively free from any one particular kind of crime. A certain class of crimes may, owing to various peculiar circumstances, be almost unknown in a country; and yet it may, with respect to morals, be, on the whole, in a very unsatisfactory state. There are other sins besides profligacy; and the nation in which they abound cannot be called pure. We expect to find in an upright people, soberness, honesty, a due regard for human life, a respect for the laws of the land, truthfulness, a proper appreciation of the sanctity of an oath, and a love of even-handed justice, even where it is opposed to the dictates of party feeling. Perhaps in some of these particulars our own fellow-countrymen might be found wanting.\* Your own experience will enable you to form an opinion on this point. Certainly it does not indicate a high national tone with respect to the four last-mentioned qualities that a Dignitary of the Church of the majority should publish an address which palpably sanctions a gross disregard of them. The Venerable Archdeacon Fitzgerald, P. P. of Rathkeale, when a trial was about to take place for an assault committed on, what he would call, a "spiritual poisoner," writes respecting such a case:—"If I were a Catholic jurymen, I would, without leaving the box, acquit the prisoner, no matter what laws and lawyers may say; no matter what old gouty judges, with great horse-hair wigs, may have said

\* "The number of murders committed in Ireland in 1837 was 722, making an average of very nearly two per day. Of these, 124 were in the County of Tipperary, which is almost exclusively Roman Catholic."

on breaches of the peace, and all that sort of thing." And so obvious was the bearing of this suggestion that the trial in question was, on the application of the crown solicitor, adjourned to the next assizes. Again, we find that Major-General Bourke, J. P., Limerick, in evidence given before a Committee of the House of Lords—evidence adduced for another purpose by Mr. Daunt himself, testifies to a "general indisposition on the part of the people to respect the law." And Dr. Leahy, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel, gives in a pastoral lately issued, a well-authenticated detail of murders, maimings, and other grievous bodily injuries that have occurred in a small district in the County Tipperary during the last six years. Most of these have resulted from so trivial a cause as a dispute about the age of a bull. The rival parties were named three-year-olds, and four-year-olds, respectively. His list is as follows :—

"9th July, 1856.—Denis Quinlan, a four-year-old, parish of Emly, killed at the fair of Hospital."

"August, 1856.—John Fitzgerald, a four-year-old, killed at his own door in Emly."

"October, 1856.—John Kenna, parish of Emly, killed at Rodus, in same parish. He did not belong to either faction."

"September, 1858.—Michael Hayes, parish of Hospital, a four-year-old, killed at the fair of Hospital."

"1859.—James Brown, Knockany, received a stab which put his life in danger."

"1859.—At a funeral in Killeely, John M'Grath of Emly, a four-year-old, badly fractured."

"November 6, 1860.—Returning from the fair of Knockany, Edward Fitzgibbon was killed. It is doubtful whether his death is to be ascribed to faction."

"1860.—One Murphy, a three-year-old, was killed between Ballylanders and Galbally."

“June 12, 1860.—At the fair of Ballybrood several persons were injured in a faction fight between the Mulcahys and Connollys of Caherline and the Smalls of Killeely on the one side, and the Lundons and Conways of Killeely on the other.”

“May, 1861.—At a funeral at Emly, a wicked fight took place between the three and four-year-olds, for which nine persons from the parish of Emly, and four from the parish of Hospital, were punished by Sergeant Howley at the sessions of Cashel.”

“1861.—John Molony, a three-year-old, and Daniel Connor, a four-year-old, both of the parish of Emly, began to fight at the chapel-gate on a Sunday, and having retired to a field close by, fought it out during mass, in the presence of several spectators.”

“December, 1861.—At a hurling in the parish of Emly, a man named Taylor was badly fractured; for which a man named Kennedy was sentenced to three or four years’ penal servitude.”

“1861.—A man named Callaghan, not of any party, returning from the fair of Emly, was killed by a person who did not belong to any party.”

“1861.—At a hurling in Killeely, a man named Small was badly fractured by persons of the opposite faction. This occurrence arose out of a faction fight at the fair of Ballybrood, in 1860.”

“1862.—At the fair of Killeely, Molony, a three-year-old, badly beaten by Conolly, a four-year-old.”

“April, 1862.—At the fair of Ballindreena, parish of Knocklong, Roger Egan was badly fractured by some of the three-year-olds, because he was seen in company with some of the opposite party, though he did not belong to either.”

“August 22, 1862.—Edward Fitzgerald, Hospital, was



killed in the same place. This death was not owing to faction."

"1862.—Michael Buckley, of Emly, was badly fractured."

And even with respect to the very sin chiefly charged against England—that of infanticide—I grieve to say that it is by no means unknown in Ireland. Many cases of it have found their way into the newspapers; and there are many more, we may be sure, that have never done so. If all these could be enumerated, and the number multiplied by four—inasmuch as the inhabitants of Great Britain are about four times more numerous than those of Ireland—perhaps the contrast would not be so very great as Mr. Daunt seems to imagine.

It should, moreover, be taken into account, that since, as we are told both by reason and by Scripture, men can sin in thought as well as in word and in deed, a very large class of sins is altogether withdrawn from our observation. And respecting the degree in which these may prevail, it is, of course, impossible for us to pronounce.

But even should it be admitted that there is a considerable difference with respect to morals between the two countries, and that this is in favour of Ireland, yet Mr. Daunt's conclusions will by no means necessarily follow. We have still to examine whether, as he assumes, the greater purity of our country is owing to the prevalence in it of the Roman Catholic religion.

And in order that this might be satisfactorily shewn, it should be proved to us that no part, or at least but an insignificant part, of the crimes of England has been committed by Roman Catholics. Of this, however, we are offered no evidence; while, on the other hand, those of us who read the public prints can call to mind some testimony of an opposite character. Thus we cannot forget that Mullins, the murderer of Mrs. Emsley, was a Roman Catholic and an Irishman. And

one of the latest capital executions in England was for the murder of a woman more than eighty years of age, committed likewise by an Irish Roman Catholic.

In support of the theory which credits the Roman Catholic religion with the supposed superior morality of Ireland, there is but one piece of direct evidence supplied us. It is derived from workhouse statistics. These show that in the year 1852 there was a far larger proportion of illegitimate children in the workhouses of Protestant Ulster, than in those of the other three provinces. Now, at first sight, this seems a stubborn fact for us to deal with; but a little investigation will prove that it is not so formidable as it looks. In the first place we should bear in mind that Ulster is by no means an exclusively Protestant province. Slightly more than one-half of its inhabitants are Roman Catholics. Of these, in all probability, a large proportion belongs to the poorer classes. And so it is by no means unlikely that the inmates of the Ulster workhouses are for the most part Roman Catholics. This being the case, the statistics adduced would evidently prove nothing respecting the point in question.

And again, the mere consideration of these statistics as they lie before us, should lead us to seek some other explanation of the diversity they exhibit, than the prevalence, or otherwise, of the Roman Catholic religion. For we find that the proportion of illegitimate children assigned by them to each province is not at all proportionate to the Roman Catholicism of that province. Thus Leinster is, with respect to the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children in its workhouses, much more widely distinguished from Munster and Connaught than it is from Ulster; and yet it is, in point of the Roman Catholicism of its inhabitants, in a very great degree more closely connected with the two former than with the latter. These are the respective figures: Connaught has a population of which

95 per cent. are Roman Catholics; and the workhouse statistics assign it—in the particular referred to—a proportion of 1 to 23. Munster is 94 per cent. Roman Catholic; and its workhouse proportion is 1 to 21. Leinster is 86 per cent. Roman Catholic—not very much less than either of the former; and yet it rises in workhouse statistics to 1 to 11. Ulster is but 50 per cent. Roman Catholic (a considerable change from the 86 per cent. of Leinster); and in workhouse statistics is 1 to 7—in this respect not by any means so much separated from Leinster, as Leinster is from its fellow Roman Catholic provinces, Munster and Connaught. And so it is plain that the degree of illegitimacy in Irish workhouses does not vary in proportion to the Romanism of each province.

To regard the matter in another point of view: Connaught is, as I have said, 95 per cent. Roman Catholic, and in workhouse statistics 1 to 23. And if it be to the slight diminution of Romanism to 86 per cent. in Leinster that we are to ascribe the great increase in its workhouse statistics, *i. e.* 1 to 11—as it must be if Mr. Daunt's theory hold good—then we should find in Ulster, where Romanism is diminished to 50 per cent., a workhouse proportion of about 1 to  $2\frac{1}{4}$ ; whereas the actual proportion is the very different one of 1 to 7. Thus the theory in question, when tried, is found wanting; and so falls to the ground.

There is again a very important point with respect to which you may be greatly misled by these statistics. You may imagine, as it is seemingly designed you should, that these prove that there was in 1852 a greater number of illegitimate children in the workhouses of Ulster than in those of either of the other provinces. This I will shew you is very far from being the case. Number and proportion are two different things; and in the matter before us the former is decidedly in favour of Ulster. According to the workhouse

returns for the week ending April 24th in the year in question (1852), the number of children in the workhouses of each province was as follows: Connaught, 12,695; Leinster, 17,362; Munster, 44,094; and Ulster, 8,339. Calculating then in accordance with the statistics that Mr. Daunt has quoted, we find the number of illegitimate children in the workhouses of Connaught to have been 552; in those of Leinster, 1,578; in those of Munster 2,099; and in those of Ulster, 1,191. So then Ulster, the population of which was by the census of 1851, upwards of 2,000,000,—being considerably larger than that of Munster, and than that of Leinster, and almost double that of Connaught, had in its workhouses, at the period referred to, but 1,191 illegitimate children; while Munster, with its smaller population, and 94 per cent. of Roman Catholics, had 2,099; that is, nearly twice as many. In place then of Ulster having had the largest number, it had, with the exception of Connaught, the smallest. And should the difference in population be taken into account, even Connaught will be scarcely an exception. Thus Mr. Daunt's statistics, however alarming they may have appeared, have burst harmlessly.

Their utter impotency will become the more apparent when we proceed to consider in what manner we are to account for the diversity in the four provinces, disclosed by them, with respect to the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children in the workhouses. I have already suggested that this proportion may be but a test of the extent to which legitimate children are kept out of these houses; and that so we might naturally expect it to vary according to the prosperity or otherwise of the district to which it refers. Now this explanation exactly applies in the case of Ulster. We know that in the year 1852 Ireland was but beginning to recover from the effects of the potato famine: and we are aware that that province suffered much less severely at that period than



did Munster, Connaught, and Leinster. On this account the inhabitants of the three latter were in much larger numbers obliged to take refuge in the workhouses; and so caused the illegitimate, who would naturally be found there, to appear in a smaller proportion. The Poor-law returns for the week ending April 24th, 1852, give us the number of able-bodied men, the bread-winners of the country, in the workhouses of each province. They show that there were 2,023 in Connaught; 3,387 in Leinster; 10,646 in Munster; while in Ulster there were but 725. Or if we take the entire number of inmates, we find that there were in Connaught, 26,653; in Leinster, 41,752; in Munster, 101,040; and in Ulster with the largest population, but 17,008. This, I think, satisfactorily accounts for the legitimate children in the workhouses of the latter showing a less proportion.

There is one more piece of evidence, drawn from statistics, in support of the opinion I have expressed that the proportion in question varies with the degree of prosperity enjoyed by the country, which I will set before you. A considerable improvement has taken place in Ireland since 1852; and so likewise is there a very marked change in this proportion. The statistics of that year, as given us by Mr. Daunt, range as you may remember, from 1 to 23 to 1 to 7; having an average of 1 to 16.47. Now we learn from the Poor-law Report published last year that for the half year ending March 25, 1861, the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate children in the workhouses of Ireland had become so high as 1 to 1.28 (about  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ); and for the half year ending September 29, 1861, 1 to 1.41 (not quite  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ). How far the several provinces are differently affected by these proportions the Report does not supply us with the means of determining.

I promised at the commencement of this Lecture that I would bring forward some statistics which would show that

those adduced by Mr. Daunt do not prove the pre-eminent immorality of England so decisively as he supposes. I have now kept my promise: for the last mentioned proportions—referring to Ireland in the year 1861—are more unfavourable than those he advances with respect to England; which are, for England taken by itself, 1 to 1.49 (almost  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ), and for England together with Wales, 1 to 1.46. If then the proportions of 1 to 1.28, and 1 to 1.41 do not prevent Ireland from being, as he describes it, “on the whole, bright and pure,” the smaller—and therefore more favourable—proportions I have just mentioned cannot greatly condemn England. Thus Mr. Daunt’s evidence has, in this particular, completely broken down.

So far we have been acting mainly on the defensive. But now we will turn our attention for a little to certain circumstances which go to prove that Ulster is, not merely not worse, but even better conducted than some of its more Roman Catholic neighbours. It appears, as Mr. Puxley has noticed, that it requires very nearly as many police to keep order in the one county of Tipperary, which is  $93\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. Roman Catholic, as are necessary for this purpose in five counties of Ulster. The police in Tipperary, according to a late return, number 1,112; while those in Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh and Londonderry, are but three more—1,115. And this is not to be explained by saying, that, as Tipperary is a large county, it may, perhaps, be nearly as large as the five taken together. They are, in point of fact, more than double its extent; it being 1,061,731 acres, and they 2,682,011 acres. Nor can the excuse be made that it is more populous than they, for Antrim and Down have each a larger population; and it is, in this particular, far out-numbered by the five taken together. They together amount in population to 1,154,811: while it numbers but 247,426—not quite

quarter as many. Amongst these 247,426 it is found necessary that 1,112 police should be stationed: and yet 278 of that force are sufficient amongst Antrim's 376,054 inhabitants—of whom, be it remembered, but  $16\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. are Roman Catholics; and 284 preserve the peace in Down, which, being but 33 per cent. Roman Catholic, has a population of 299,866. You remember too that it was in Tipperary that the murders and maimings detailed by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel occurred.

We can also form some estimate of the relative moral condition of the North, and of the South-west of Ireland, from observations lately made, in the discharge of their office, by two Roman Catholic Judges.

The Right Hon. Justice Fitzgerald, in his address to the Grand Jurors of Antrim, said:—"A few weeks ago, when I opened the Queen's Commission in the town of Dundalk, I ventured to predict that the state of the county Louth, as exhibited by the calendar, would probably by the state of most counties in the north-east of Ireland. Gentlemen, we have now arrived at the last town of the north-east circuit, and in addressing the Grand Jury of the County of Antrim, I am very happy, indeed, to be able to point out to you that that prediction has proved correct. Gentlemen, I have now before me a calendar for the County of Antrim, and for this great community. It is represented altogether by eleven cases. It is true that there are two or three of these of a serious character—that is, of a character demanding on investigation your best attention; but there is nothing on the face of the calendar at all to create alarm. It does sometimes happen—indeed, it frequently happens—that the calendar is but an uncertain index to the state of the country—I mean in reference to the administration of the criminal law; but I have before me now another document, which is a very

elaborate return, prepared by the county inspector, stating in detail the circumstances, or a short abstract of the circumstances of each reported outrage or offence since the last assizes; and I am also enabled from another source to form some opinion of the characters of the cases which came before your very efficient Chairman of Quarter Sessions; and from the whole of these, and from the inquiries which I have made myself, I believe I may safely address you in accents of congratulation. From these documents, as far as I can judge, it appears to me, as I have stated before, that there is nothing to create alarm. No agrarian offence presents itself. There does not appear to be any combination against the law; no threatening notices, and no offence of that character; and, on the whole, the law seems to be observed, and to be impartially enforced by you. I think, then, I may in justice state that the County of Antrim seems to be in a satisfactory condition."

Now contrast this very high testimony respecting the North-east of Ireland in general, and the County Antrim in particular, with some remarks made by Judge Keogh in the City of Limerick. When pronouncing sentence of death on the murderer Walsh he said:—"It is a terrible state of things by which we are surrounded. Even whilst I was trying this case yesterday, the bloody arm of the assassin was bared in the neighbourhood of this city. Even whilst I am now speaking perhaps another victim has gone to his account. What a country do we live in! What a state of things does exist when, as I said, yesterday, in the open day, and in the immediate vicinity of a populous town, a gentleman goes out on his ordinary calling, little conscious that his footsteps are dogged, tracked, and marked by armed assassins." It is no support to Mr. Daunt's argument that the County of Limerick,



where these words of earnest and honest indignation were evoked, is nearly 95 per cent. Roman Catholic.

It is of course a material point in the present inquiry that we should ascertain to what religion the criminals of Ireland mainly belong. This it is in our power to do: and here again the result is in favour of Protestantism. The total number of criminals for 1861 was 29,859; and of these, 25,967—or, more than 86 per cent. were Roman Catholics. 3,127 were classed as Protestants of the Established Church; the remaining 765 being Presbyterians. After full allowance is made for the greater proportion of Roman Catholics in the population, these returns will remain decidedly adverse to Romanism. The Roman Catholics of Ireland are to the Protestants as a little more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 1; while the Roman Catholic criminals are to the Protestant as nearly  $6\frac{3}{4}$  to 1: or, in other words, though the Roman Catholics are not four times more numerous than the Protestants, yet their criminals are much more than six times those of the Protestants. Again, in the year 1860 there were 1,429 juvenile prisoners in Ireland: and of these, 1,297 were Roman Catholics; making nearly 10 Roman Catholic juvenile prisoners to 1 Protestant. The number of juveniles sent to reformatories that year was 249; of whom 223 were Roman Catholics—nearly 9 Roman Catholics to 1 Protestant. These facts would lead us to reverse Mr. Daunt's assertion that Romanism is a better preventive of crime than Protestantism.

There is, however, no reason why we should confine our inquiries on this subject to Ireland: for, if Romanism be the cause of the supposed greater purity of Ireland, then we should find similar results attending its prevalence in other countries. That the very opposite is the case is almost too obvious to require proof. It is notorious that the tone of morals in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe is in general low in the

extreme. To offer evidence of this by extracts from the works of writers of credibility would be to form a volume, and not a lecture. Such testimony is too abundant to make it necessary to recount it to those whose reading has been in the least extended. If we but look at France, our nearest Roman Catholic neighbour, and the country by whose bayonets the Pope is now supported on his throne, we will see enough to convince us that national purity is not secured by Romanism. There the grossest crimes are of daily occurrence. There the most heartless murders are frequently committed; and so leniently are they looked on, that, except in the most atrocious of them, French juries can discern such mitigating circumstances as secure the life of the murderer. Infamous as are the enormities practised in the dens of London, they are altogether thrown into the shade by the disgraceful orgies of Paris. And so corrupt is the literature of the country that there are but few modern French novels fit to lie upon the tables of an English, or an Irish, drawingroom.

If statistics respecting the morality—or rather, immorality—of Roman Catholic Europe be demanded, I refer you to those brought forward by Mr. Puxley. These show, by the last returns laid before the king of the Belgians, and published in 1852, that the yearly average of murders in Belgium is 84—18 to every million of the population.\* Now the number of persons tried for murder in England and Wales in 1861 was but 64—scarcely more than 3 to the million. Of these 64, 30 were acquitted, and 8 were insane; so that

\* Mr. Daunt has called the accuracy of this return in question. He does so on the authority of M. Dupectiaux, of Brussels, who professes to quote very different figures from official documents. The Rev. John Thomas Waller having procured these documents, shews, in a letter to the *Cork Examiner*, that M. Dupectiaux' quotations are altogether incorrect; the true figures agreeing with those given above.

only 26—a little more than 1 to each million of the population—were found guilty. And the moral superiority of Protestant England in this particular will become the more apparent when we pass on to other countries. The Imperial Commission for statistics in Austria, published in 1855, gives the yearly average of murders in that country as 1,325—being 36 to the million. According to the Governmental returns of crime in Bavaria, the number of murders committed there in 1853 was 311—about 68 to the million. The returns of crime in Tuscany, furnished by the police, for the nine years ending 1838, give 34 murders as the yearly average—making 50 to each million of the inhabitants. “The Papal States publish no official returns of crime. . . . But from the statistical information which Dr. Bowring procured by order of the British Government, for commercial purposes, printed by order of Parliament, the annual average of murders in the Papal States is found to be 339, which gives 113 murders to each million of the population.” “In Naples the criminal calendar of one year contains the awful number of 1,045 murders, which makes 174 murders to the million.” The criminal returns of France for the year 1853 give the annual average of committals for murders there as 1,089—31 to the million. The statistics of crime in France for 1861 have been lately published. These shew that the number of convicts in that country sentenced to hard labour was 7,660. Of these 1,027 were guilty of murder; 459, of attacks on women; 168, of attempts to assassinate; 162, of wounding and maiming; and 26 were parricides. In confirmation of what I have thus advanced in support of the statement that, with reference to the crime of murder, England contrasts most favourably with the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, I will read for you an extract from a French newspaper, the *Galignani* :—“A recent statistical table of the com-

parative number of murders in the different countries of Europe shows that in England there are 4 in every million of inhabitants; in Belgium, 17; Sardinia, 20; France, 31; Austria, 36; Bavaria, 68; Lombardy, 45; Rome, 100; Sicily, 90; and in Naples 200. "In the Vaudois Valleys," (which, be it observed, are Protestant) "murder is almost unknown." Thus then the statistics of Roman Catholic countries do not support Mr. Daunt's theory.

But there is another point of view from which we may regard the subject under discussion. We may consider whether Romanism would, from its very constitution, be well adapted to the prevention of vice.

And when, in entering upon such an inquiry, we direct our attention to the Confessional, it strikes us that, though it may exercise a considerable check on some minds, yet, in the sure and ready absolution which it affords, it would in many instances have a contrary effect. A person who had once got over the sense of shame and mortification that attends the acknowledging of grievous faults to a fellow-man, would find encouragement, while indulging his unlawful passions, in the conviction that he could at any time obtain a certain forgiveness.

The Confessional is, moreover, an engine which, if intrusted to improper hands, might be worked with the worst results. There are questions allowed to be put in it from which any delicate mind would shrink; and there are some of these, as we learn from Den's Theology, of which it would be a shame, not only to speak, but even to think. It is thus possible that its influence might be exerted with the most corrupting effect. It may be said that the abuse of this institution is no argument against it; since there is no good thing that may not be abused. This, however, is essentially a power too dangerous to be placed in human hands: and though many instances of its abuse have not come to light in Ireland, it is notorious that



they have done so on the Continent, and in Mexico. That it has been thus abused is acknowledged by many Roman Catholics, and by some Popes in their Bulls.

The doctrine of Indulgences and Dispensations seems, too, one likely to act as an encouragement to sin; more especially that branch of the doctrine which prescribes certain prices for which the most heinous sins may be pardoned, or even a continuance in them permitted. The sum of money for which an indulgence may be obtained for each offence is detailed in a work written by Anthony Egane, B. D., formerly Confessor-General of the kingdom of Ireland. I extract a few instances :

|                                                                                               |    |    |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|
| “For the breach of an oath or contract<br>respecting civil concerns, . . . .                  | £7 | 2  | 3 |
| “For murder committed by a Bishop,<br>Abbot, Chief of an Order, or Knight,<br>each, . . . . . | 50 | 12 | 6 |
| “For murder by a Friar, or Guardian of<br>a Monastery, . . . . .                              | 40 | 9  | 0 |
| “For the murder of a Priest by a Lay-<br>man, . . . . .                                       | 6  | 2  | 0 |
| “For the murder of a father, mother,<br>brother, sister, or wife, each . . .                  | 4  | 1  | 8 |
| “For marrying another wife after mur-<br>dering the former, . . . . .                         | 8  | 2  | 9 |

Where pardon for these—and other no less gross—descriptions of sin may thus be purchased for money, we can scarcely be expected to discern any peculiar efficiency for the prevention of vice.

It is again, a fundamental part of the whole system of Romanism, that, provided a person duly conforms to certain rites and ceremonies, a life of sin, though it may subject him to terrible sufferings in the supposed region of Purgatory, will not imperil his eternal safety. Now we know that there are multitudes who would, for the sake of a present gratification,

incur a future and distant penalty; more especially if they were assured that it would be but of temporary duration. And so this view of religion would encourage transgressors in pursuing their guilty course.

Thus an examination of the nature of Romanism leads us to infer that no peculiar power of preventing vice can reasonably be ascribed to it; and that consequently we are right in rejecting it as the true and special source of Ireland's morality. Some of its doctrines, as perhaps that of the Confessional, may have met in this country with soil favourable to the development of such of their qualities as have a beneficial tendency: but since they have not been similarly fruitful in other regions, it must be to something more immediately connected with the locality that we are to attribute what is good in the result.

This brings us to the conclusion of the first part of Mr. Daunt's line of argument. Respecting it we have, on the whole, observed:—That he has over-estimated the sinfulness of England: that the statistics by which he seeks to prove the inferiority of that country, in a certain particular, to Ireland, will admit of a very different interpretation; and are besides applicable only to a peculiar and exceptional period of the history of the latter—later and more normal statistical returns being widely different, and in favour of England: that his comparison of the northern with the other districts of Ireland—unfavourable to the former—is based on a similar misinterpretation of statistics: that reliable returns of a late date betoken a moral superiority on the part of the Protestants of Ireland: that Romanism cannot be credited with any advantage in point of morals which Ireland may possess, since it has not produced any such result in other countries—the Roman Catholic countries of Europe being more immoral than Protestant England; and since we cannot discern in that

system of religion any such qualities as would account for a higher degree of morality than Protestantism would be likely to effect, but on the contrary can perceive much of an opposite tendency.

We now pass on to that portion of Mr. Daunt's argument in which he treats of the connection he would trace between the irreligion that exists in England, and the free circulation of the Bible.

On this point he makes, as we have already seen, two assertions: first, that the general distribution of Bibles is ineffectual for the prevention of sin; and, secondly, that it is even productive of it. These we will consider separately, and in their order.

With respect to the first, we can have no hesitation about so far agreeing with Mr. Daunt, as to say that the mere circulation of the Bible is insufficient for the production of morality. We do not entertain any idolatrous sentiments with regard to that book; and so do not suppose that it operates after the manner of a charm—we do not think that its mere presence will banish sin. We believe that in order to profit, it must be read. And still further we freely admit that it may be read, and yet do no good. For if we would benefit by it we must attend to what we read. The mere passing of the words that are written through our mouths, or before our eyes, is useless. They may be thus present with us while our thoughts are fixed on totally different objects: and after going over a chapter in this manner, we may be quite unable to give even the most vague account of its contents. We hold that the Bible, in order to be profitable, must not only be read, but read attentively; with a sincere desire to ascertain its meaning, to learn its doctrines, and to apply them practically in our lives. That we may thus make use of it we require, moreover, aid from Him from whom every good

thing must come—such aid as He has promised to all that ask it, namely, the presence of His Holy Spirit, who will give us grace to attend to the things written, to study them with teachable and unbiassed minds, and to carry into effect the admonitions they contain. Where the Bible is not thus turned to good account, we do not expect that it will overcome sin.

This admission cannot, however, afford the slightest reason against the general distribution of the Sacred Volume. It is no excuse for withdrawing a powerful means of good from the possession of the people, that many of them will not make use of it, or will not use it aright. The partial want of success with which it may be attended, is no more an argument against the free circulation of the Word of God, than it would be an argument against the establishment of medical dispensaries throughout the country, that there are multitudes who, either because they will not apply to them at all, or will not use the medicines supplied, and follow the advice of the doctor, derive no benefit from them.

Mr. Daunt's second assertion on the point now before us, advances from the negative charge against the general reading of the Bible, that it does not prevent sin, to the positive one, that it even produces it. This he accuses it of doing both directly and indirectly. He both says that some persons interpret that book in such a manner as to make it teach what is palpably immoral; and he likewise argues that the unrestricted reading of it leads to sin, through first leading to infidelity.

Now it seems to us that the instances must be few in the extreme in which persons have learned immorality from reading the Bible. There are some, but I think not many, who, being already immoral, seek to defend their misconduct by perverting passages of Scripture. But this, you will observe,



is a very different thing from their learning it from that source. They may fix on passages in which the sins of good men are recorded; while they will not look at those which show that these sins were regarded by God with heavy displeasure, were punished by Him, and were repented of. They may pretend to think that practices which were allowable under one dispensation are still so—although they live under another in which they are strictly forbidden. Or they may overlook the peculiar circumstances under which certain acts were either enjoined or tolerated. But if they really read the Bible for the purpose of learning from it, they cannot, unless their minds be of an extraordinarily vitiated character, derive from it anything that is bad. If they read through the later and more complete revelation from God given us in the New Testament, they cannot but be aware that vice is there utterly condemned: and it must be only in case they wish *not* to learn its contents, that they can persuade themselves that they see evil permitted in it. How can they pretend that sin is taught in that Book, which so continually inculcates the purest morality? In it they would find the moral precepts of the previous dispensation summed up in the two unexceptionable injunctions, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” In it they are told to “Honour all men; love the brotherhood; fear God; honour the king.” The depraved works of the flesh are there pointed out with condemnation; namely, “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like;” respecting all of which the Apostle Paul says that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Could the silliest imagine that this passage

tolerates sin? In the same place the good qualities which belong to Christianity are set forth: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It is the morality of the New Testament that says to us, "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." And it also teaches us that we should cleanse the very thoughts of our hearts from everything that is impure. Such is the character of the admonitions with respect to morals that are plentifully to be met with in that book.

It is then but an infinitesimal portion of the sin of England that can have had its origin in the reading of the Bible: and moreover it is highly improbable that any considerable amount of it pretends to a scriptural *sanction*.

Mr. Daunt adduces as a case in point, the fact that John Knox, of Scotland, maintained that the Bible commands us to punish with death those guilty of idolatry. It is, however, one thing to advocate a theory from the Bible, and another to derive it thence: and it is plain that the study of that book cannot be regarded as the source of this error, since the opinion that it was right to visit with the sword and with the stake the holders of wrong views on the subject of religion, largely prevailed at that period, even amongst those who could not be accused of much reading of the Scriptures.

He notices, too, that such arguments in favour of Mormonism as professed to be drawn from the Bible were, on a certain occasion, most telling with the audience. But what more does this amount to, than that persons will always attach the greatest importance to what is advanced—or seems to be advanced—on the highest authority?

He mentions, indeed, the case of an old woman who was led to embrace Mormonism through a wrongly applied quo-

tation from Scripture. But here it does not appear that she was so much convinced by the argument, as enticed by the hope that by joining the Mormonite body she would become young again. Neither is it said that she supposed the passage adduced to be itself susceptible of an immoral interpretation: though it was made the means of luring her to accept an immoral system of religion. And all that her case can prove, is —what we scarcely need to have proved—that even the best things may be abused. Some may pervert and wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction; for God has not thought fit to hedge round any of His gifts in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of their being misapplied. It seems to be His will that all His gifts should require due exertion on our part in order that we may turn them to good account. All of them are liable not only to neglect, but also to misuse. Such possibility of misuse gives scope for the trial and exercise of our faith, patience, and obedience.

But that the reading of the Bible may thus be attended with danger, is no reason for even partially closing the book. This is clear from the fact that the Apostle Peter, who points to those that wrest the Scriptures as an example to be avoided, does not hence direct that the study of these Sacred Writings should be restricted. On the contrary he assumes in his Epistles that the persons to whom he writes are familiar with the contents of the Inspired Volume; and tells them “as new-born babes to desire the sincere milk of the word.” The Apostle Paul too speaks of it as an advantage enjoyed by Timothy, that “*from a child* he had known the holy Scriptures.” To recur to an illustration already employed, it would be as absurd to check the general distribution of the Bible because some—in spite both of the plain purport of its teaching, and of the means provided for their proper guidance—have applied it in a highly objectionable manner; as it

would be to prohibit the establishment of medical Dispensaries throughout the country, because some may—notwithstanding the clearest directions—use in a way that is positively mischievous the medicines thus supplied them.

The manner in which Mr. Daunt would indirectly connect the general reading of the Bible with the prevalence of sin, is by maintaining that the former tends to create religious sects; that these lead to infidelity; and that infidelity produces sin. This is a train of reasoning that suggests many topics for consideration, and will require to be investigated at some length.

And here we will observe, that we are as much opposed to schism as Mr. Daunt is. We see its evil as plainly as he does; and lament it as sincerely as he can. We know that it is strongly condemned in the Word of God: and we can distinguish the reasonableness of this condemnation in the injurious results likely to flow from such a source, including those he particularly dwells on—the obstacle thus offered to the spread of the Gospel among the heathen, and also the danger of shallow and conceited thinkers being led thereby to infidelity. Our views on the subject are that such division, if not a duty, is a sin. If we cannot remain in connection with the Church of which we have been members, unless we would profess to believe what we are convinced is false, then separation is a duty; but under other circumstances it is a sin. This duty was imposed upon our Church at the time of the Reformation: but it is obvious that no obligation is hence laid upon us to sanction unnecessary divisions.

In thus stating our conviction that schism is an evil, we do not make any admission to the disadvantage of our own religion, or in favour of that of Mr. Daunt.

If he boasts that the Church of Rome is undivided, while the divisions of the rest of Christendom are manifold; this is no more than any the most insignificant and impure of Chris-



tian sects can do. Any one of them can as well say :—" We are one body while those who differ from us are divided into numerous sects."

It may indeed be said that the vast majority of Christian sects are sects of Protestantism. Now if the term Protestant be applied to every Christian body that is neither Roman, Greek, nor Armenian, this assertion is a mere truism—if every body of Christians which is neither the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek, nor the Armenian, is to be called Protestant, there is not much asserted in saying that the majority of sects are Protestant. It should be remembered that of the various bodies which are thus classed under the one denomination, many differ widely from each other—in some instances more widely than they do from Romanism. In many most important particulars the United Church of England and Ireland is totally at variance with the Unitarian body; and equally is she distinguished from Mormonism.

But it may be meant, that a body of men, when once separated from the Church of Rome, splits up into a number of sects—that those who have thrown off the safeguards of that system acquire a tendency to division. So long, however, as these safeguards consist mainly in the prohibition to inquire or judge, it is but a trifling argument in favour of Romanism, that its adherents are generally disposed to hold together. The assertion that men who will not exercise their thoughts on a certain subject, will not differ respecting it, possesses just as much weight as the equally obvious proposition, that blind men will not be likely to differ about colours.

Those who are so fond of taunting Protestantism with its sects, seem to assume that Romanism has had no sects. Now, if the Church of Rome be, in the strict sense of the words, the Catholic Church, it must include all such bodies as are

called Christian, and, consequently, all the sects of Protestantism.

There were, too, numbers of sects which, before the Protestant Reformation, emanated from Romanism. As for instance the Paulicians, the Petrobrussians, the Henricians, the followers of Tanquelinus, the Pasaginians, the Caputiati, the Apostolics, the Eonites, the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, the Quietists, the Flagellants, the Dancers, the Calixtines, the Taborites, and many more. It may be urged that all these were condemned as they arose, and were in general put down (and we well know by what means it was attempted to put them down.) But this does not prove that Romanism is a security against the origination of divisions. To borrow an illustration from an admirable and most useful publication, the "Cautions for the Times:" "What would be thought if an Englishman were to boast to a Hindoo or Chinese, that London enjoys the happiness of being exempt from all crimes, and also from conflagrations; and should afterwards explain his meaning to be, that all crimes are forbidden by law; the person offending being liable when detected and taken up, to be punished as the law directs; and that though fires do break out from time to time, there are fire-engines ready to be called out on such occasions?"

The existence of Protestant sects cannot be brought forward as an argument against the truth of the distinctive doctrines of Protestantism; for by such a method of reasoning Christianity itself would be proved untrue, since there are so many Christian sects.

Mr. Daunt accounts for the schism-producing tendency he discerns in Protestantism, by saying that that system leaves every man to pick out his own religion from the Bible. This is certainly not the practice of our Church; nor, so far as I

am aware, is it that of any other. Our Church has pronounced what she believes to be the doctrines of true religion in her Creeds, her Articles, her Catechism, and her Liturgy. She appoints ministers, whose office it is to instruct the people in those doctrines: and she is careful to require that every infant baptized in her communion shall be brought up in them. At the same time she asks not any one to accept her teaching as true, simply on her own word. She undertakes to prove that it is so: and on all such points as are strictly matters of revelation she refers, as her ultimate standard of appeal, to the Bible. As she professes to teach nothing as revealed truth but what is contained in that book, or may be proved thereby, she has no hesitation in placing it freely in the hands of her people. She encourages all to read it, confident that she can show to them, and admitting their right to have it shown to them, that what she expects them to believe is there taught. And she errs not in adopting this course, for she has unquestionable sanction for it. The Jews of Berea, when the Word was preached to them even by the Apostle Paul, "searched the Scriptures" to test the truth of what they heard. And the inspired writer of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, so far from blaming their conduct, applauds it. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica," he says, "in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." But the issuing of an invitation by our Church to all men, to see for themselves that what she teaches as the Word of God, is really to be found in the Inspired Volume, is a very different thing from her leaving them to search out a religion for themselves in that book.

We have next to deal with the assertion, that it is the general diffusion of the Bible which has been the source of

the multiplicity of religious sects in England. In this we are not at all inclined to agree with Mr. Daunt.

We know, from the number of sects that arose before the Reformation, that there may be schism where the Bible is practically an unknown book.

And with respect to modern sects, some of them, as the Southcotian, the Swedenborgian, and the Mormonite, are professedly based, as sects, not on the Bible, but on some pretended new revelation—a revelation of such a kind as St. Catherine, and other saints of the Church of Rome are said to have received.

Another source of schism is ambition. Men have preferred to wield a certain amount of power, and secure a degree of notoriety, as the leaders of a sect, to remaining in—it might be—an obscure position in the Church of which they had been members. For such persons it is not requisite that they should have any doctrinal objections against that Church.

Many of the separations that have taken place have been on other grounds than points of doctrine. Some have left our Church on the ground that she is too lax in her requirements: others, because they consider her too exacting. Some would have her more exclusive in the terms on which she admits members to her community. Some think that admission to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not sufficiently restricted by her. Many would reform her system of ordination; although it often happens that they have not in the first place thought it necessary to ascertain what that system is. Some of these would increase the tests she requires of candidates for Holy Orders; while others would so far abolish them that any person who felt a strong inclination to enter the ministry should be able to do so, no matter how devoid of information, and consequently unqualified for the office, he



might be. Her Liturgies, too, have been made a ground of objection. Some, through an unhealthy craving for the excitement of a more emotional system of religion, feel a distaste for the earnest sobriety of her services. Others say that the very use of forms is a restraint on devotion. They forget that an extempore prayer is a form to all that hear it. The worshippers can as little depart from it as they can from what they find printed in our Book of Common Prayer. It is a form too that affords them less liberty; since they cannot—as is manifestly in their power to do in the case of a published form of prayer—consider it beforehand, and examine whether, or not, they are willing to join in all its petitions. And those who regard the so-called extempore prayer as a spontaneous burst of devotion, and on this ground prize it, are not aware that it usually is (as indeed so solemn an act of worship ought to be) the result of premeditation: frequently the very words in which it is to be offered have been prepared beforehand, and have sometimes been even committed to writing.

For such reasons as these, insufficient as they are, many persons have separated from our communion. And the sects thus formed, having in direct opposition to the teaching of Scripture, accepted and acted upon the theory that mere preference is ground enough for division, have, in the practical development of their own principle, become subdivided into many more.

When we deduct the schisms that have arisen from all or any of the causes just mentioned, those that remain, as fairly attributable to misinterpretations of the Bible, will not be very many. And consequently the portion of the sin of England which can be traced, through schism, to the general reading of the Scriptures, must be inconsiderable.

The remaining steps of Mr. Daunt's argument are, that the

prevalence of sects produces infidelity; and that infidelity produces sin. Into the consideration of these statements we are under no obligation to enter. For the free circulation of the Bible (the subject with which we are mainly concerned)—not being chargeable, as we have just seen, with the multiplicity of religious sects that exists in England—cannot be affected by any evil consequences that may result from these sects.

There are however some points, with reference to these last steps of the argument, which it may be well to notice.

In the first place we readily assent to the statement that sin is nurtured by infidelity.

And again, we do not question but that some amount of infidelity may have been occasioned by schism. We can easily conceive that a careless person, who is desirous of excusing himself for the neglect of religion, may reason, that amongst the multitude of conflicting sects it is extremely difficult to determine where the truth may lie, and that where such diversity of opinion exists, it is highly probable that all are wrong; and then may conclude, that he is justified in not believing in any religion.

We may also observe that schism is not the only source of infidelity. Lord Bacon, as quoted by Mr. Daunt, says that "many divisions introduce atheism." But he does not intend to imply that divisions are the only cause of atheism. On turning to the Essay from which the quotation is made, we find, that in specifying four causes he but mentions this as one of them. Now we can distinguish much in the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome that would be likely to produce infidelity. As, for instance, the doctrine which teaches that one and the same body can, at one and the same time, be in a hundred different places: or again, the system of indulgences; scapulars; masses for brute animals; and foolish

stories respecting so-called saints. We cannot wonder that many of those who have been taught that such absurdities are an inseparable part of religion have become infidels. They cannot accept a system, which they believe to be so tied up with the most glaring inconsistencies, that they must stand or fall together.

We have now investigated the entire of Mr. Daunt's argument; and may state, as the result of our inquiry, that the sinfulness of England, be it more or less, is not to be attributed either to Protestantism in general, or to the unrestricted reading of the Bible in particular, and so cannot fairly be brought forward as an objection against them.

We may be asked to what we then consider it attributable. I think that, on looking into the circumstances of the people of England, we can perceive a sufficient occasion for it. The population of England and Wales is now double what it was sixty years ago. In 1801 it was 10,000,000; whereas in 1861 it had increased to more than 20,000,000. The present rate of increase is between 500 and 600 a day. A consequence of this enormous increase of the people is, that the provision made for their religious instruction has become inadequate: the more so since the increase has not been evenly distributed over the entire country. Large numbers have been massed in the great cities: and in the seats of trade and manufacture populous towns have sprung up. Thus multitudes have been brought together in places where the number of clergymen that had been provided was very small. For instance, we find that there are in the city of London six parishes, each of which contains above 100,000 inhabitants. And so it often happens that there is but a single clergyman to labour amongst a population of more than 10,000. Considerable efforts are now being made to remedy this deficiency, and we may hope to see it in time removed. When it is so,

I think we will be able to observe a great diminution in those crimes to which Mr. Daunt has directed our attention.

That the evil is fully perceived is a hopeful feature in the case. As such it is regarded by the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Carlisle. In a speech lately made by him, he says:—"At no previous period, I believe, in the history of the world, has there been such a fixed desire, and positive determination thoroughly to probe every wound, to bare every latent symptom, to dissect every complication, to throw light on every dark hole and corner, to discover all that is wrong, in order that we may see and know how to do all that is right." When there exists this healthy determination to expose every evil, it will not be difficult for those who are so inclined, to accumulate what they may consider evidence of a general depravity. They are either unwilling or unable to recognise the fact, that the unrelenting disclosure of what is bad argues a much better national feeling, than is evinced by that moral stagnation which silently tolerates it.

With respect to Scotland; the painful amount of immorality, which (as Mr. Daunt proves on unimpeachable testimony—the admissions of the Scotch Divines) is there to be met with, may, in some measure, be ascribed to the unsatisfactory state of the marriage laws in that country; the unseemly modes in which marriage may there be contracted tending to degrade the married state in the popular estimation; and the uncertainty as to what constitutes a valid marriage (even eminent lawyers being unable to agree on this point) being obviously most prejudicial to the existence of a high moral tone amongst the people.

That Protestantism has not been more successful in checking this immorality, may in part be traced to the peculiarities of the particular view of Christianity that almost exclusively prevails in that country. An acute, and even metaphysical



analysis of doctrines is, under that system, too apt to be prosecuted, to the neglect of the proper enforcement of the practical obligations of religion. Where these latter are not sufficiently enforced, we cannot wonder that they should not be duly observed. Practice ought indeed to spring from doctrine—that is, works from faith: but still, as we learn from the example of our Lord, and of the inspired writers of the Holy Scriptures, it is necessary to set forth frequently and strongly the duty of being “careful to maintain good works.”

In part, again, the continuance of the wide-spread immorality testified against Scotland, may be attributed to defects in the prevailing ecclesiastical arrangements of the country; more especially those which relate to the method of conducting public worship. The services to be used in such worship are, with the exception of the musical portions of them, in general left to the composition of the officiating ministers. For though John Knox drew up a form of public prayer, yet, as he did not make its use compulsory, it has not been adopted. In carrying out this method, it may readily happen that points of duty, as well as of doctrine, may, either through inadvertence, or from other causes, be habitually omitted, or but slightly noticed by the minister. There are some sins which, from modern notions of refinement, men may be unwilling to mention; and it is not unlikely that they will, when it is in their power to do so, either pass them over in silence, or but indistinctly allude to them. And when such offences are thus dealt with, the people, not being duly impressed with their enormity, will be the less on their guard against them, and will view them with the less abhorrence. But in our Church, no private feelings of the minister can restrain him from bringing constantly, and in unmistakable terms, before the minds of the congregation, the unlawfulness of every species of depravity; since, however, he may shrink

from doing so when in the pulpit, he is left without any choice in the matter when in the reading-desk and chancel. In this manner the Liturgy will do much to supply the deficiencies of the sermon. In continually praying against the commission of certain sins, we are effectually reminded of their heinousness, and so are perpetually warned against them. When we seriously consider this point, we can easily comprehend the disadvantage under which those persons must lie, who do not, even occasionally, participate in such public services as those with which we have been blessed; or who do not come within the reach of that beneficial influence on the general state of morals which they must diffuse.

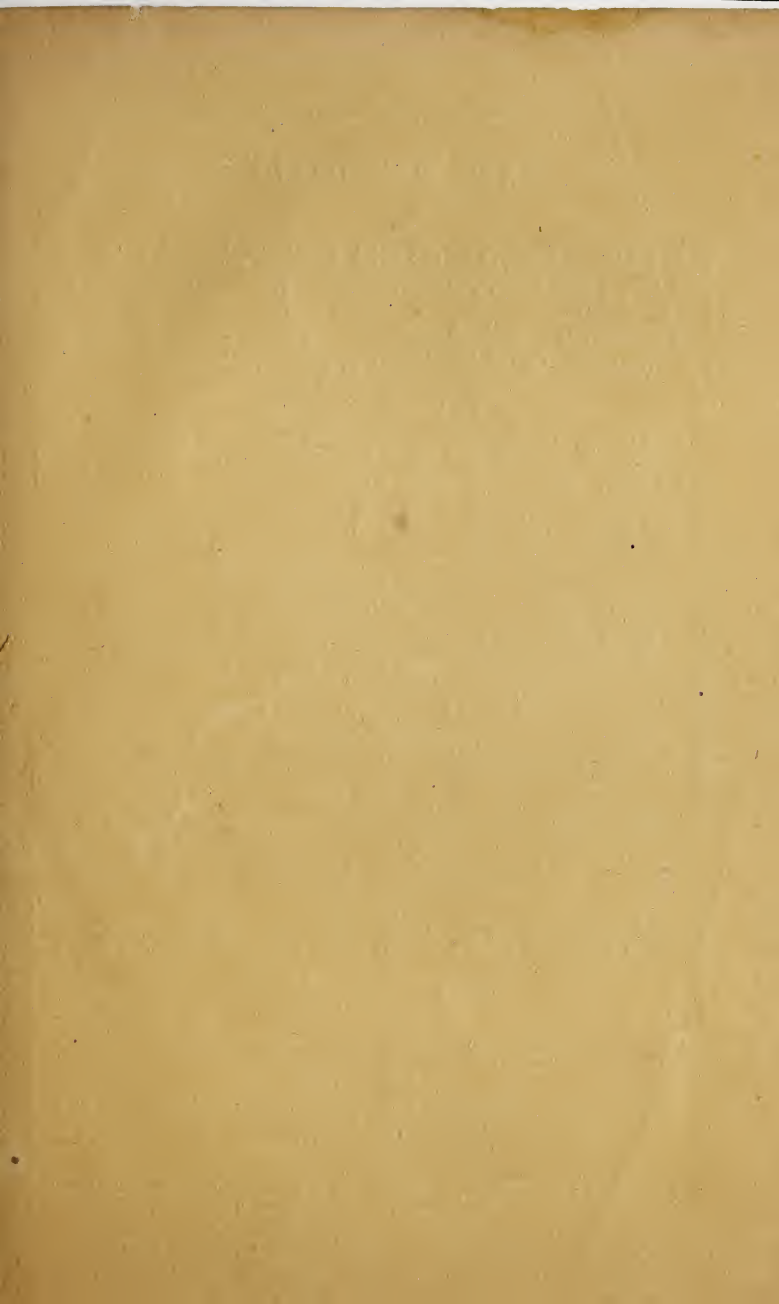
On the whole then we have found nothing in Mr. Daunt's letters which can shake our faith in the doctrines of our religion: but on the contrary, our inquiry has rather had the effect of strengthening it. As we have confidence in our religion, we believe that the results of a fair investigation will ever be in its favour. And so it has proved in this instance. For instead of its appearing, as was asserted, that Protestantism tends to produce crime, we have seen it demonstrated, on the authority of authentic statistics, that it has shown itself a better preventive of crime than Romanism has been.

There have indeed been sin and crime on the part of some of those who profess our Faith. But this does not startle us; for we are well aware that the mere name of Protestantism is not sufficient to secure any from wickedness. Persons may outwardly profess a religion, who yet refuse to be influenced by its doctrines. The wickedness of such persons is doubly great; for it has (as the letters we have been considering strongly remind us) the additional guilt of throwing discredit on the Church of which they are unworthy members.

How watchful then should we be against falling into sin;

not only on account of its offensiveness in the sight of God, but also because of the slur it casts upon the true religion we have embraced, and the hindrance thereby given to its spread amongst those who have not yet accepted it. Let us continually seek the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, that we may effectually endeavour to follow the great example of Him "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."







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